

182814  
[7]

Sermon 3.

A  
**SERMON**

Preached in His  
**Majesties Chappel**

A T  
**WHITEHALL,**  
O N

The Eighth of *February* 1684.

Being the *Sunday* after the Death of His late  
Sacred Majesty King **CHARLES** the  
Second of Blessed Memory.

---

By *Thomas Horne*, Fellow of *Eaton Colledge*,  
And Chaplain to His Late Majesty.

---

**L O N D O N :**

Printed for *Robert Horne*, at the *South Entrance*  
of the *Royal Exchange* in *Cornhill*.  
**MDCLXXXV.**

SEER MON

WATTE

WATTE

WATTE

WATTE

WATTE



1 Theff. 5. 19.

*Quench not the Spirit.*

**I**T is well known with what vehemence this Text has been urged against the use of *Liturgies* ; and it has been made as manifest by Learned men , with how little justice it has been objected. So that it would seem frivolous to meddle with it any more ; but that the Objections rise again, after one would think they were defeated : And the Principles are as active, as if their Arguments were invincible. Wherefore since there is no end of objecting, it is allowable ( I hope ) for us at least to consider the Question over again, if it be but to

B

shew

shew that we are neither ashamed of *Our Reasons*, nor afraid of *Theirs*. And this I intend to do fairly, without any heat of Controversie; endeavouring rather to lay, than raise the dust that in the heat of Skirmishes blinds the eyes of men, and following the native force and evidence of truth. Though it be hard to forbear speaking warmly to a Cavil which reproaches all our Worship of God, and blasts all those Intercessions you put up this last Week in behalf of our *dying Sovereign*, the fervency of which I know not where to parallel. For if this Objection be true; in all those *strong Cries and Supplications*, you took more than ordinary pains to *Quench the Spirit*.

The Question I intend to examine is, Whether Forms of Prayer *quench* (or *stint*) *the Spirit*, as they use to speak? Which Question, I will first state plainly, and then propose the method of searching into it.

The Question will be clearly stated, by shewing, first, what is meant by *Forms of Prayer*;



*Prayer* ; Secondly , What it is to *stint the Spirit*.

1. By *Forms of Prayer* , is meant either the determining before we pray, what *things* shall be the *matter* of our Prayer, leaving the words to be moulded *ex tempore* ; or else the determining beforehand both what things to pray for, and also in what expressions. The former of these we may call a *Form of Matter* onely ; the latter, a *Form of Matter and Words* too : and both these may be either mutable, or fixt as a constant Rule of Worship.

2. By *stinting the Spirit* must be meant either the hindering or quenching of the blessed Influence of the Holy Spirit of God upon our Souls in prayer ; or else the infeebling the vigour of Devotion in the spirit of *man* ; the depressing our affections in their flight to the throne of Grace ; the smothering the pious zeal of the Heart, the extinguishing that holy fire of the Altar in which the Sacrifice of Prayer should ascend.

The state of the Question therefore is this ; Whether a *Form of Matter* onely , or a *Form of Matter and Words* too, hinder either the Influence of the Spirit of God, or the Soul of man in prayer.

Now because when we look upon things in gross, we see them confusedly , and are apt to shuffle Truth and Falshood together ; therefore I will resolve Prayer into its simplest Principles, that we may judge more distinctly of the Question before us, according to this following method.

First, All publick Prayer in the Church is made up of the Prayers of single persons ; therefore we may consider of Prayer in one man, and see what quenches the Spirit in him.

Secondly, The Prayers of the Church are made up of variety of *matter* ; as Confessions of sins , Praises and Thanksgivings , and of many Spplications for Spiritual and Temporal good things : wherefore we may select one out of one of these sorts, and consider that distinctly. Suppose any man  
would .

would request of our heavenly Father some one signal blessing ; as, that God would *save the King*, (which was your mournful Request, and must still be your dutiful Prayer.) But because that would provoke a passionate sorrow which bleeds yet , and I would rather speak to your Judgment, I will suppose rather that a man intends to beg of God that gift of the *Holy Spirit*, which is promised in the 11th of St. *Luke*, v. 13. which we do pray for in the Lords Prayer , and frequently in the rest of our Prayers.

Thirdly, as in other Prayer, so in this particular supplication for Gods Spirit, we may consider the outward prayer of Words, and the inward prayer of the Heart, from whence the outward ought to flow.

The business is now drawn into a narrow compass ; and the careful considering of it thus, will be (I hope) a clue to lead us into a true judgment of the whole Question.

First

First then, this inward Prayer of the Heart is the Soul and Life of all Prayer, which God especially requires, and therefore chiefly regards, and favourably accepts: Without this, the outward pouring forth of words is a noisome carcass, whether we use a form of words, or new conceived fluency. Words were made for man; not to help God to understand our meaning, who looks into a desire, and searches thought; who takes notice of the first springs of the motion of our mind towards him. This inward desire must be in all, whether publick or private Prayer, or nothing is done. Prayer may be without words, and words may be without prayer: for *that* is the very essence, *these* are not. And from hence it follows, first, that words conceived *extempore* cannot be an ingredient necessary to make our Prayers accepted of God. Secondly, that the useful and necessary help or gift of the Spirit in Prayer, is to be placed in the inward Prayer of the Heart, and not in expressions of words, where the life of Prayer is not. And this one consideration might be enough  
to

to end all dispute about *extempore* words of Prayer.

Secondly, If a man address himself to request of God this blessing of his Spirit, though he supplicate without uttering one word, yet here is a form (a form of matter) and that as narrow as can be : for his Spirit cannot be more stinted, than when it petitions for one thing. If therefore this so narrow a form does not quench the Spirit of God, nor hinder the flight of his Prayer to the Throne of Grace, nor obstruct its entrance, nor make the mercy of God turn away his ear from attending to his suit ; what larger form can do it ? And to satisfy us that this does in no wise hinder his Prayer, we may consider further,

That in the third place, every sober Christian, and man of sense, will readily grant that he will pray more heartily and acceptably to God when he begs this grace of the Holy Spirit, if he go beforehand into his Closet and meditate on his own manifold frailties, and consequently his great need

need of this grace. No man can deny that he should fix and prepare his heart, by the consideration of Gods fatherly goodness and bounty, especially of his promise of *giving the Holy Spirit to them that ask it*; and all in order to the strengthening his Faith, and dependance on God, and for the increasing his humility, and the settling his good purposes and attention. Certainly this should be the work of our retirement before we pray, without which our thoughts will be apt to play and wander at the time of Prayer, and the pantings of the heart will be more languid.

But all this preparation bounds the Spirit of a man to that particular matter which he is to sue for, and this binding is the very thing which makes it a form; so that the more a man premeditates, the more is his Spirit bounded or stinted to his particular form of matter which he prays for; and so the more he is stinted, the better he prays.

For this meditation restrains the operations of his Understanding, and by that means quickens his desire; that is, it puts a stop  
to

to wandering thought, and fixes it upon that one blessing he would request, and gathers together the scattered motions of the Affection, and determines all his earnest desire to that one point; which restraint inflames Religious Zeal, and gives it a greater force: As winds are strongest in their narrowest passages, as a vast Ocean when it rolls all one way, and beats with its whole weight upon a streight Channel; that very stinting of it makes the Waves rage, and multiplies the swiftness and vehemence of their motion beyond imagination, that it forces its way with irresistible violence; but when once it has passed from thence into a wide space, and gained the room it struggled for, there where the way is open and free, all its vigour is lost in it self, and becomes a pacifick Sea.

We may take notice by the way, that it is advantageous (which some complain of) for the *Liturgie* to be divided into several distinct Prayers, that we may request more earnestly while we determine our Souls to single petitions; whereas if all the Prayers were made into one long Oration, we could not



so easily discern where one Request ends and another begins; so that the intention of our minds would be lost, and the undetermined vigour of desire be becalmed as in a wide Sea. The sum of this is, that Premeditation on one single form, does not hinder but help the Spirit of man.

It is hard to conceive how that which is so useful, so necessary a preparative to serious Devotion, should any wise hinder the Spirit of God on the heart of man in supplication; yet lest I should seem to shift away from the business, I will consider this particularly. If a man pray for the conduct of Gods gracious Spirit, what operations of the Spirit are needful in this Supplication? what are necessary to attain the end Prayer, *i. e.* acceptance with God? I conceive that if he have a love of God and Goodness, a belief of that Promise made by Christ, *Luke 11. 13.* a fervent desire of the grace of God, humility, and a serious purpose of obeying its direction, his Prayer will be accepted. Now serious premeditation, such as I have described, is the very exercise of all these. Consideration of the fatherly good-



goodness and promise of God made by Christ, is the very exercise of Faith in him, and a proper incitement to a greater love of him. The weighing with himself the great and manifold imperfections of his corrupt nature, and therefore his great want of the continual aids of the Holy Spirit, kindles ardent desire, and increases humility; which is also furthered by reflecting on his own unworthiness, compared with the unlimited bounty, and unmerited goodness of God; and all together are strong motives to better purposes and stronger resolutions. Is it possible that the exercise of Faith, Love, Zeal, Humility, and Resolution, should hinder the Spirits working these very things? when they are the *preparations of the heart*, which, as Solomon says, *Prov. 16. 1. are from the Lord*. One might as well say, that Pride, neglect of God, or Infidelity, further the operations of the Holy Spirit.

Again, if after this preparation of heart, a man address himself to the same Prayer in that very devout posture of mind in which his meditation left him, assuredly the Spirit of God will perfect what it self began, and

assist him more yet in that Prayer to which it prepared him. The Royal Prophet says, *Psal. 10. 17. that the Lord hears the desire of the humble, he will prepare their heart, and will cause his ear to hear.*

Wherefore, since both the first thoughts in the preparing meditation, and the following desires in act of Prayer, are from God, it follows, that he who considers beforehand, has a portion of the Spirits help double to what the *extempore* man has, who knows not beforehand what he shall pray, but invents his petition in the moment when he presents it. So far is a prepared form of matter from hindring the good effects of Gods Spirit on the mind of man, that it is a great furtherance. And from hence we gain also a new Argument for the former Conclusion, *i. e.* that it does not hinder the fervency of mans Spirit: For that which furtheres the effects of Gods Spirit, cannot hinder ours in the least.

4. Let us go on with our single Form, and suppose that this Man resolves with himself never to cease from begging the promised Spirit.

Spirit of God, but to wrestle daily for this great blessing ; here it becomes a stated or prescribed Form to him , as much as if it were appointed by Authority , and he were resolved to obey it : and this is our case in praying by a *Liturgie*. And in this case neither is the Spirit of God quenched, nor the mans own Spirit hindred : Not the Spirit of God, because he obeys that command of our Saviour, in the 18 St. *Luke*, v. 1. to *pray always and not to faint*, i. e. not to give over the same request , as Christ explains himself in the words immediately following, by that Parable of the importunate Widow, who continued to sollicite the unjust judge with the same suit, till she had obtained her desire ; and therefore if he should not repeat that Prayer, it would be a neglect of a plain duty ; which sinful neglect must really hinder and quench the Spirit. Nor can the mans own Spirit be said to be hindred, unless we will blasphemously affirm , that our Saviour has given such a command about our Prayer, as hinders our Soul from praying we should.

Now

Now if we apply what has been said hitherto of one mans single petition, to all the Prayers of a Congregation, it is manifest, that since the most limited Form does not any wise quench the Spirit of God, or the Soul of Man; since if it does stint our mind, it does it to advantage, by stopping only the loose roving of invention, whetting thereby the serious desire of the Soul; our large and comprehensive Forms cannot be a hindrance to Prayer by any narrowness that is in them.

The truth is, we continually offend our good God, frequently in the commission of the same sins, and in the omission of the same duties; and they must be confessed: most mercies we receive every day, and every moment, and they deserve incessant thanks: the infinite and peerless perfections of God, are *the same yesterday, to day, and for ever*, and therefore the same praise endureth for ever: our needs are for the most part the same, especially our Spiritual wants, which require the most intensive fervency; therefore the chief matter of Prayer is such as must not be changed. There is

no such place in the substance of Prayer for the new invention of men, as some are apt to conceive. Shall we invent sins *extempore* to confess before God? we commit too many, and it will take up time enough to consider well of them. Can we invent Attributes in God to magnific? they are immutable. Can we invent mercies to thank him for besides what we have received? that imagination is vain, and unworthy of God; let us offer our thanks with gratitude for what we have received. Or should we invent new Topicks of Blessings to ask of him? let us first consider what we do need, and request those things seriously.

There is *one thing necessary*, which we are every day to seek: we always want the grace of God, and must always pray for it; we need the heavenly food, and must daily pray that God would *give us ever more this bread*.

I acknowledge that if a man should pray daily for one particular matter onely, so as to exclude others that are necessary; or if our publick Prayers omitted some important request, and we were hindered from completing

pleating our necessary Petitions ; then the Spirit would be streightned. But what is wanting in the *Liturgie* that it is fit to beg of God ? what would any of us want if God should grant us all that is contained in the *Lords Prayer*, in the full extent of it ? or what want is there which we cannot address our selves to God for in a short Ejaculation, in the time of publick Prayer, or else in private, and so compleat the supposed defect of the *Liturgie* ? This we can do if we are in earnest, and therefore nothing can hinder us, but onely our selves: When there is a prepared Heart, there is nothing without can put a stop to the inward operations of mans Spirit ; nothing can obstruct the course of the thoughts, or block up the Will from desiring ; no power on earth can stop the freedom of its course ; no obstacle in Nature can reach it.

I have spoken as fully as is fit to the form of Matter, not wholly omitting to speak of Words ; and much more need not be said of them, but that the people of our Nation have an unaccountable fondness  
for

for the *extempore* effusion of the words of Prayer ; though they love not that phrase *extempore* Prayer, but choose to call it *conceived* Prayer. Their opinion of it is strange, because all men must acknowledge that the Life of Prayer is in the desire of the inward man, and that words are but the outward dress of Prayer, and that the Spirit and Life of Prayer cannot be in that which is but the outward part ; yet when the Ministers of the Church of *England* use the Forms prescribed (suppose in the *Visitation of the Sick* ) many of the common people think that they have little or nothing of the Spirit of Prayer in them, because they do not invent a new Prayer ; and no good is done, unless some private person comes and prays for some time with a multitude of ready utterance : then they think there is the Spirit of Prayer ; which shews that they are verily perswaded that that there is more of the Spirit in Words than really there is.

And the name they give to this *extempore* utterance is as strange : for no reason can be given why that which is not thought of

D

be-



before, but invented in the moment of utterance, should be called *conceived Prayer*, to distinguish it from other Prayer: for certainly that which is premeditated and thought of frequently before, and also in the time of Prayer, is conceived too; and the more it is thought of, the more conceived.

However, let us consider whether a Form of Words hinders either the Work of the Spirit of God, or the Spirit of man in Prayer. That they do not hinder the Spirit of God, I argue first from hence, That it cannot be proved that the Spirit of God does always give new expressions of Prayer. Suppose in the first place, that the Spirit did once give a man the very Words of Prayer, and he should constantly use those Words, he would pray *as the Spirit gave him utterance*; and yet this would be a Form of Words. And such a Spiritual Form of Words is the *Lord's Prayer*. Now there is no just reason to think the Spirit should continually change those first Words for new: for as the Apostle reasons, *Heb. 8. 7. concerning the Covenants, If the first Co-*  
*venant*



*venant had been faultleß, there had been no need of the second; so there is no need of new Words unless the first had been faulty. And besides this, the rules which are given in Holy Writ, for the manner of framing our Words, argue that the Spirit did not intend alway to indite the Words, but leave them to man: as that Rule which Solomon gave, Ecclef. 5.2. Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth; therefore let thy words be few. And our Saviours rule, 6 Matth. 7. Not to use vain repetitions as the Heathen, or to think we shall be heard for much speaking: and v. 8, 9. it is manifest that he purposely gave his prayer in few words, to prevent the using many words in prayer: Be not ye therefore like unto them, i. e. in multiplying words; for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father, &c. That is, in this short way, therefore that ye may avoid much speaking. Another rule the example of Solomon affords, in 2 Chron. 6. throughout, whose prayer is made up chiefly*

of the words of Gods promises to his Father. What need of giving us rules for our Words, if the Spirit gives the Words? or of what use are the Rules when given, if we are not to do it?

Secondly, I argue from the general opinion of those who love *extempore* prayer, concerning the Spirit of God; for they generally say, that the work of the Spirit is after an irresistible manner upon the Elect, and therefore it cannot be hindred there; and as for the Reprobate, if any work of the Spirit be hindred in them, it can do no hurt.

Let us see in the next place, whether Forms of Words hinder the Spirit of man.

There are but these three uses of Words that I can think of in Prayer; First, to express the matter or thing which we beg of God. Secondly, to express our desire of that which we pray for, *i. e.* the earnestness or height of our desire. Thirdly, to kindle affection in them that hear us. I can name no more, unless it be by Words to win upon God, and perswade him to hearken and grant; which I hope no man dares to think.

1. As to the first, I cannot see how Forms of Words should hinder our Spirit, but by stinting the mind to the things which they signifie. Now if a man were to pray that Prayer, which I have so often spoken of, for the promised Spirit of God; let the Words be varied an hundred ways, whether *extempore* or by meditation, yet still (if the expressions are not foolish, but fit to signifie the matter) they all mean the same thing; and so the mind is as much tyed to the same subject, as if there were but one sort of expression: and therefore if a Form of Matter does not hinder us, neither does a Form of Words.

2. But I verily believe that it is not the Matter so much, as the intense *ardor* of their *desire*, which the men that use *extempore* prayer would fain express by Words; which fruitless endeavour I confess a *Liturgie* hinders indeed. They would shew either to God or the People how much they are in earnest; how vehemently they *pant after the living God*: they would find words to signifie

signifie how much they *hunger and thirst after righteousness*. But there are no living words that can fully express the degrees of affection, or the heights of desire, any more than there are colours to paint the swiftness of an arrow: therefore though they labour for Words, and stretch invention, yet the *unalterable groans* cannot be uttered. But because they think they may come something nearer, as the invention grows warm, they try it over again, and strive to find new ways; and this delightful play of the invention, they think to be like *Job's pleading* with the Almighty, and *Jacobs wrestling* for the blessing; and that this can come from nothing but the Spirit, and that therefore Forms quench the Spirit.

But this proceeds from an opinion, that there is more of the Spirit of Prayer in Words, than there is really; and from a persuasion that there is more need of expressing in Words the fervour of our Zeal, than in truth there is: for besides that the thing cannot be done, yet if it could, there is no need of wording our affection to God, who knows our needs, and the sincerity of

our

our desire : and to men we should not be over-desirous to expresse it , because it lies open so much to ostentation ; it proceeds also from a forgetfulness of *Solomon's* advice, that *God is in heaven, and we are upon earth, and therefore our words should be few*, Ecclef.

5. 2.

A third use of Words is to raise our Affections, which *extempore* Prayer pretends much to ; and therefore it is commonly objected, that the constant use of a *Liturgie* makes the people pray lazily. It is true indeed, that *extempore* Prayer has raised in the people an affection to the men of that way, and a scorn of Forms. It is true, that variety of passionate words does please the ears of men ; But that it has made the people more Serious and truly Devout, is not so true: there is nothing which unconsidered words can do, which serious consideration beforehand of the Majesty of the Great God, and of the weighty things we are to request, will not do a great deal better, and without the danger of sudden invention ; for *in the multitude of words there is vanity*, and  
one

one mean expreffion or foolifh word is apt to fpoil more ferious devotion in the hearer, than can be mended again in a great while : and it is this vanity of words which Forms are defigned to hinder.

And whereas it is objected that a *Liturgy* makes men pray lazily, it ought to be confidered whether fomething elfe has not deadned the Devotion beforehand, when the *Liturgy* is accused of it.

If I approach before God with a fenfelefs mind, with defires after wickednefs, or bent wholly on this world , this does *quench the Spirit of God* , and take away the life of Prayer. For how can we pray for the guidance of the Spirit of God, while we have fome fin reigning in us which will not let us yield to the conduct of his Grace ? if I come with an unprepared carelefs heart, not confidering either the great Majefty of God, or the Bleffings I fhould pray for, I have already murdered my own Devotion, and my Prayer will be formal whether I pray *extempore* or by a Form. If we regard not the mercies of God, how can we give thanks aright ?

right? if we account lightly of the Offences we have committed against the Lord of the whole Earth, or intend to commit them again, or care not if we do, all our Confessions will be onely in words. If a man come with a prejudice against a Form, or a scorn of our *Liturgy*, the ardency of Prayer is already extinguished. So that many times the Devotion is slain beforehand, and the *Liturgy* is accused of it, because it does not raise the dead.

Let men bring hither a prepared and unprejudiced heart, let them lay aside the love of words, and scorn of our Prayers, let them come full of reverence to God and trust in him, with serious thankfulness, fervency, contrition, and Religious resolutions, and then see whether a Form can hinder them.

Another frequent Pretence or Objection there is, that the Forms prescribed, tie us up so that we cannot enlarge our Spirit according to the extraordinary cases that may happen. Suppose a man is under any Spiritual desertion, or heavy affliction, or fallen into some heinous sin, or has received some

E fre sh



fresh comfort, or any great blessing; here are not Prayers enough for these emergent occasions, and this seems to hinder our Spirit. This I call a pretence; for commonly it is so: because extraordinary cases are not a reason against the ordinary use of *Liturgies*. As to the Objection in those extraordinary cases, I say, that besides the provision made in the *Liturgie* for many cases, besides the extraordinary Forms put forth by Authority for publick cases; this does not hinder our Prayer, *i. e.* the earnest request of the Soul, but only the expressing our case particularly. But neither Forms of Prayer, nor *ex tempore* conceived Prayer, can particularly express every case that may happen to every private man; neither is there so much need of reporting our cases particularly before God, for he knows whereof we have need, and what we do but desire. When Christ bids us pray thus for the Necessaries of this life, *Give us this day our daily bread*; do you think our Father knows not that we want raiment and health too? or that he will forget to give them, because they are not expressly mentioned? this were to think the understanding



standing or bounty of God are straight and narrow like ours.

If it be meant that a Form of Words cannot comprehend our particular case, or that our Spirit is so detained thereby, that we cannot enlarge our selves so as to reach our case; this is a very gross mistake, for want of considering the general and comprehensive words in which our Common Prayers are exprest.

I will explain my self by one instance for many, in those words of Confession, *We have done those things which we ought not to have done, &c.* Suppose that one man of the Congregation has fallen into some great sins, and another has been guilty of others, and so on: After we have considered every one privately those particular sins in which each one has offended God, we can all unburden our Consciences before God, and acknowledge to him our several offences, though we use the same words; because they are large and general, and so comprehend all our particular sins. Apply the same to Thanksgiving, to Praise, and Supplication, and the case will be very clear; for these are

the great parts of our Prayer. But this previous consideration is the great labour of real Prayer, which most men love to escape.

Whatever extraordinary case happens to any of us, still preparation is needful before we approach unto God in Prayer. And for this reason the constant use of *extempore* Prayer in publick, does and must hinder the real Spirit of Prayer, because it hinders the preparation of heart to all that shall be pray'd for. For if the Minister change every time his Words and Matter, or if he reserves to himself whether he will change, or how much, it is utterly impossible for the Auditors any more than to guess what he will say. And how then can they prepare their hearts for the particular things which he shall chance to pray for.

I wish those who scorn our Forms, would consider, where the life of Prayer is, and contend earnestly for that. It cannot be in Words, and therefore they should place no more in them than they are capable of. Prayer is not an exercise for mens parts, not to shew ready invention, or elocution, (much less vanity) but humble desire, and Faith in  
God :

God : God is not taken either with sounds, or outward gestures, that please the eyes and ears of men; but with sincerity and uprightness, which man cannot discern. These may be where there are no variety of delightful Words, and passionate exclamations; and the petitions are then accepted. On the other side, all the outward shews of zeal may be without the life of Prayer; and then the Words beat the air, and return empty; and God is offended too. The abundance of melting words may come from the heart; but they may not come from thence; and what man knows the heart of another? And if all do come from the real zeal of him who speaks; yet it is your faith and fervency, not meerly his, that will procure you a blessing from God. Wherefore we should labour to wean our selves from this love of the new words of Prayer, and strive more earnestly for the inward and Spiritual part of Prayer, which none can deprive us of; in words we may be deceived, and in all that is outward; in this we cannot. The Publicans prayer had but few words, and that was accepted; the Pharisee prayed thrice as long, and returned empty.

Why

Why should any man presume to offer to God any thing unconsidered : *the words of rashness, and the froth of the lip !* why of all persons should any man choose to trifle with the Majesty of the Living God ? But when through a hast to utter any thing before God, men have spoke unadvisedly with the Tongue , and have not considered that they do evil , it is adding mad presumption to ~~the~~ say, *the Lord has done it* ; or that his wise Spirit has put it into their heart to utter vanity.

And let us who are satisfied that Forms do not *quench the Spirit* , take care of our Addresses to God, that we do not quench the Spirit of Prayer by negligent approach to him. Since we who pray by a *Liturgie*, have this advantage of those who do not, that we know beforehand what Petitions we are to put up, that we can consider and weigh them all, which they cannot ; let us not loose the advantage, and offer *extemporary* desires before God. Let private meditation prepare us for our publick Prayer, that our thoughts being fixed beforehand, and our fervent desire kindled, we may enter into the House of  
God

God so full of awful reverence, that there may be no room for levity and rambling imaginations : that irreverence and carelessness being banished away, we may have nothing to do but to confess with good purposes, and pray earnestly, and give thanks with joy and gratitude, and be more ready to hear than to offer the Sacrifice of Fools ; that we may say with the Royal Prophet , *My heart is fixed O God, my heart is fixed, I will sing and give praise*, and so of the other parts of our Worship. And then I doubt not, but the experience of upright men would decide this question in favour of *Liturgies*, as effectual as any thing, unless the publick *extempore* Prayers had been printed, as the Common Prayer is ; which would have extinguish'd all their glory, as the Sepulchral Lamps go out when they are exposed to the Light.

They who never have been used to Forms, or come not with an unprejudiced intent to pray heartily by them, can be no judges whether Forms hinder the Spirit ; whether are they judges who seem to like the Common Prayer, but bring no Devotion to it. I appeal to the serious devout persons

*neither*

persons of this place, who continually attend upon Prayer; whose zealous devotion is remarkable and exemplary, who are therefore competent judges. Did you ever approach with a Religious sense of the Majesty of God, with a real desire to request any blessing of him, and were hindered by the *Liturgie*? have you not rather found that every expression was weighty, and added to your considerate zeal?

I appeal to your Devotion this last week, so fervent and unwearied. Did not your hearts burn within you at every intercession you so earnestly put up for our late Dread Sovereign? you seemed to pray as if you were in all his weakness, and felt all his pains, from the first astonishing stroke to his last gasp. You were with him in all the comfortable, the fearful and despairing changes: you seemed to groan with the Agonies of his Death: you carried your Tears and Prayers, hour after hour, from the Closet to this place with some impatience, waiting for the next opportunity of imploring God again for him, and rejoicing when it was come; as if every one were mourning over  
their

their *first born*. And when the last sad news came, you submitted to Gods providence, and rejoyced in a peaceable Succession, as much as passionate grief could give leave.

You have really set your selves a pattern of fervent Prayer for your whole life. If ever you would request of God any great blessing, remember how you prayed this week; and let your own example stir up your Devotion for the future.

And take care that you do not *quench the Spirit*, by a perswasion that God hearkned not to you, because he granted not that desired life. For your dutiful and Loyal Devotion is yet acceptable to God, which is a desirable end of Prayer. We are taught to close our daily Prayers with this submission to his wisdom and goodness, *Fulfil now O Lord the desires and petitions of thy servants as may be most expedient for them*. And if we pray with Faith in him, we ought to be perswaded that what he does is *most expedient for us*.

F.

Where--



Wherefore turn now the force of your Loyal Devotion, to thanks for our Gracious Sovereign, and Prayers for Gods blessing on him, for a Just and Wise, a long and peaceable Reign.

---

**FINIS.**

---